

THE KAREN PEOPLE OF BURMA

782 the family, and its contents are sprinkled on the grain. This rite
[783] is supposed to cleanse the families from evil and to produce good
crops. The four priests officiate under special names, of which
three signify, respectively, lord of the village, messenger, and



KAREN GIRLS POUNDING PADDY IN A MORTAR OUT-OF-DOORS

keeper of the village. I do not know the meaning of the fourth title. During the ceremony they wear embroidered tunics, longer than ordinary garments. From the people they receive gifts of beads and ear ornaments. In some villages a bullock is substituted for the hog, and in one of the Mopgha villages near Toungoo the inhabitants require a coal-black bullock, being willing to pay a large price in order to obtain one.